



# News at 12

## Highway District 12 Kentucky Transportation Cabinet

Serving Floyd, Johnson, Knott, Lawrence, Letcher, Martin & Pike Counties

Kevin Damron, PE, Chief District Engineer • March-April 2010 • Volume 10, Number 2 • Sara George, Editor

### Remembrance Rock set up at DO



**S**helby crew members Jayme Fleming, Troy Damron, Mike Branhm, Jordan Fulton, and Jerry Little recently delivered a rock from the US 460 excavation to the District Office.

Weighing an estimated half a ton, the boulder now sits outside the main entrance to the District Office. It is a Remembrance Rock, said Chief Kevin Damron. "We will put a plaque on it each year to honor the memory of people killed on Kentucky highways during the previous year.

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**RON SLONE**

### Slone attends national wellness conference; named to local YMCA team

**R**on Slone, D-12's Construction Analyst, has long been interested in wellness and healthy living. His knowledge of what it takes to live a balanced, healthy life recently paid off in a pretty impressive way.

When Sherry Riddle, Executive Director of the Pikeville YMCA, contacted D-12 looking for someone to serve on their Pioneering Healthier Communities team, CDE Kevin Damron recommended Ron.

Pioneering Healthier Communities is an initiative funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, one of the country's leading supporters of programs which impact health and wellness.

From February 17-19 Ron attended a conference in Washington, DC, where he and seven other team members from the Pikeville Y learned how to assess community strengths and weaknesses; about various community strategies; how to track success; and how to develop, plan, and begin a community intervention process.

Others attending the conference with Ron were Sherry Riddle, Tammy Bowling (YMCA staffer), Shelia Belcher (Pikeville Medical Center), Carol Napier (Pike Fiscal Court), Patrece Beverly (Pike County Health Department), Dawn Rowe (Pikeville Independent Schools), and Kaye Baird (Member, Kentucky Board of Education).

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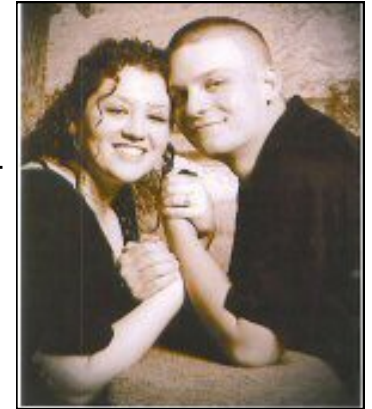
Sophie Catherine **Weddington** joined sisters Chloe Elizabeth 9, Maggie Grace 8, and Sadie Rose 3 as the newest member of **Paxton** and Stacie's family.



Austin Tuttle, far left, is co-captain of May Valley Elementary's Quick Recall Team, which placed first in its district this year. Austin placed individually in science (third in district) and math (second in district; first in region!). He also played on the school's first basketball team this year. His sister, Alex, pictured above with her brother, is also playing basketball. She participated in the Allen Central Cheer Camp which resulted in her cheering during a high school game. They are the children of **Stacy Tuttle**, D-12's IT coordinator.

A single-vehicle crash on Wednesday, February 24, put **Ian Newsome** in UK Medical Center with multiple injuries. Ian's Blazer flipped and tumbled about 150 over an embankment on Town Mountain Road as he was driving to work. He ended up with a broken jaw, cracked nasal sinus,

broken nose, three broken ribs, a shattered rotator cuff, two collapsed lungs, and 20 stitches over his left eye. At home after 10 days in the hospital and two surgeries, he is slowly recuperating, according to **Darren Compton**, his father-in-law, who works with Ian at Canada Maintenance. He is pictured here with his wife, Chasity.



**P**lease remember these friends and families in your thoughts and prayers:

**Benny McGinnis**, (Martin County Maintenance), whose mother, Lushie, died at the age of 90 on Friday, February 19. She was preceded in death by her husband, Willie B. McGinnis. In addition to Benny, she is survived by five sons, Basil, Abe, and Gordon, all of Debord (Martin County); George and Leslie of Tomahawk; five daughters, Vicki Magee, Thelma Cook, Inita McGinnia, all of Debord; Susie McGinnis and Marietta Bowen of Inez; two brothers, four sisters, 32 grandchildren, 43 great-grandchildren, seven great-great-grandchildren, and one great-great-great grandchild.

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# Tackett among first graduates of KSP civilian police academy

**T**erry Tackett, D-12's Incident Management Coordinator and Maintenance Analyst, is among the graduates of the first ever Kentucky State Police Citizens Police Academy. Thirty-one people graduated in Post 9's charter class. They were all recognized on January 21.

The 10-week academy was one of 16 hosted statewide. Participants met once a week to learn about the history of the Kentucky State Police, cadet training, uniform patrol procedures and tactics. They also learned about undercover investigations, special response teams, canine operations, commercial vehicle enforcement, crime labs, and other aspects of KSP work.



**TERRY TACKETT**

KSP Major Lynn Cross said that the Post 9 academy drew the most interest of any academy in the state. People from all walks of life signed up with D-12's Tackett to learn more about law enforcement and, particularly, about the Kentucky State Police. Among the members were health care workers, school teachers, laborers, retail business owners, community involvement/marketing managers, and college students.

One of the most interesting parts of the academy were the KSP Ride-Alongs. Academy students joined troopers on traffic stops, criminal investigations, and other law enforcement calls.

Suetta Clevinger of the Pike County Health Department was also a class member. She works extensively with Tackett and others to conduct child safety seat inspections throughout Eastern Kentucky. She told Mary Meadows of the *Medical Leader* about troopers taking care of children who were removed from a home during one Ride-Along experience and the "nerve-wracking" evening she spent on a domestic violence complaint.

She and Tackett agrees that their respect for law enforcement increased as their understanding of a trooper's job became more clear. "I admire them," Clevinger said, "absolutely admire them for the work that they do."

The next Citizen Police Academy should be held some time this year. Mike Goble, Information Officer for Post 9, and one of the academy instructors, said people should be alert for radio and newspaper announcements to find out how and when to apply.

## 🎵 🍏 LIFE NOTES 🍏 🎵

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Former Letcher County Maintenance crew member **Tony Wilder** in the death of his mother, 80-year-old Mildred Louise Wilder of McRoberts, on February 11. In addition to Tony, she is survived by five daughters, Gloria White of Ft. Mitchell, Durhonda Johnson of Florence, Nancy Smith of Kingdom Come, Brenda Little and Melissa Lucas, both of McRoberts; another son, John Wilder of McRoberts; three brothers, three sisters, 19 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Nath Wilder. Services were at the Seco Freewill Baptist Church, of which she had been a member more than 59 years.

Shelby Maintenance crew member **Troy Damron**, in the death of his father, **Troy Ed "Boone" Damron**, 79, of Sookey's Creek, who died Tuesday, March 9. A US Navy veteran, Boone retired as foreman at Shelby Maintenance, Highway District 12. He was a member of the gospel group Avonelle and the Royal Heirs. In addition to his wife, Avonelle, and son Troy he is survived by another son, Lance Damron of Little Creek; on daughter, Rhonda Leigh Mullins of Caney Highway; one brother, five grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and two stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral services were March 12 at Roberts Funeral Home Chapel at Robinson Creek.

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## Remembrance Rock

**“W**e have held several remembrance ceremonies to honor the memory of children and adults who have died on the highways of District 12,” said Sara George, Information Officer. “These events have been “the most moving, well attended events we’ve presented. The families appreciate our gesture and more media people have covered these events than any other activity we’ve had since I’ve been with the district. Now we can have those services at the District Office, invite family members, and have a permanent memorial for them to visit if they wish.” George noted that Kentucky highway fatalities dropped to a 10-year low in 2009.

The Kentucky Office of Highway Safety released final statistics for 2009 on March 29, 2010. There were 791 fatalities last year, 35 fewer than in 2008 and the lowest total since 1999, when the death toll was 729. Fatalities declined for the fourth consecutive year.



Photos by Sara George



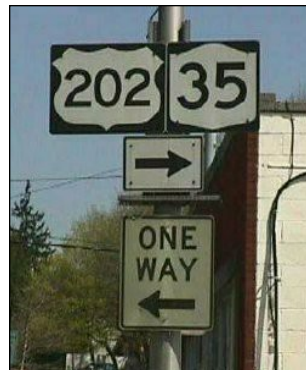
# LIFE NOTES

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**Rusty and Linda** (former Chief District Engineer) **Justice** in the death of his mother, 80-year-old Helena Leedy Justice, who died February 28. She was a deputy clerk for the Pike County Clerk's Office and a member of the Regular Baptist Church. She was preceded in death by her husband, Victor Justice. In addition to Rusty, she is survived by two son, Stanley of Pikeville and Steve of Betsy Layne; two daughters, Selma Justice of Harold and Vanessa Johnson of Virgie; one brother, one sister, 11 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral services were March 3 at JW Call Funeral Home Chapel.

**Brenda Watts** (Permits In-

spector) in the death of her uncle, Fred Hunt, 63, on February 12. In addition to Brenda, he is survived by his wife of 46 years, Eula Smith-Hunt; one daughter, Sandy Hunt-Campbell and one son, Shawn Hunt, both of Kimper; five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. Funeral services were February 15 at Thacker Funeral Home.



Definitely not the work of our sign guys! Must be from Ohio.

**Roy** (Permits Inspector) **and Sherry Sawyers** in the death of her sister, Lois, age 60, on February 17. Services were at Grundy Funeral Home. The past year and a half have been tough on Roy and his family. His mother-in-law died last year and his home burned to the ground on Thanksgiving Day 2008.

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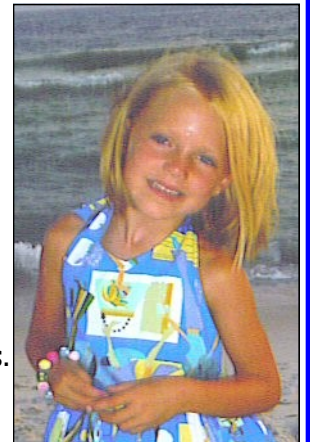
**Charity and John Collins's** daughter, Sidney, age 6, will have two extremely serious surgeries soon, one on April 19 and one on April 23, both at Children's Hospital in Cincinnati.

Sidney suffers from cortical dysplasia, which causes her to have seizures. The seizures cause a drop in her heart rate and are potentially life-threatening. The surgery, however, is not without risks. MRIs and other tests have revealed five spots on Sidney's brain, four on the left and one on the right side. One of those on the left is a large focal point which doctors believe is the origination point for the seizures.

The first surgery will determine how close this focal point is to areas of the brain that control vital functions. T

The second surgery will remove the focal point. The best possible outcome is that the focal point will be removed with no damage to Sidney's brain and the other four spots will shrink and go away.

Please pray for **Sidney, the medical team, Charity, John, and brother Blake as well as Grandparents George and Ruth Collins, Aunt Mandy Justice, and all Sidney's extended family.**



## Chief Thoughts . . .

**T**he world stopped spinning for Highway District 12 Monday, March 29, at a little after 9 a.m. I received a phone call from one of our Vehicle Enforcement Officers that two of our highway workers had been killed at the US 460 intersection at Mouthcard. These employees had reportedly been working on the side of the roadway and had been run over by a tractor trailer. I was directed that the state police would be contacting the next of kin, once they determined who they were.



Our district leadership team gathered immediately in my office and began working to find out what happened. While I had written down Mouthcard, my thoughts locked onto Marrowbone and I called the Shelby Maintenance Garage. The faces of many of our dear brothers from Shelby flashed through my mind as I tried not to think about who this tragedy had affected. Shelby reported that they did not have any crews in the Mouthcard area and that I should call the Phelps garage.

My mind immediately shifted and began flashing the images of all of our family working in Phelps. Once again, our Phelps Maintenance Garage did not know of any of our people working in the area. They had been working around Mouthcard for the past two weeks but had finished up on Friday. Stevie Slone did immediately head out to the crash scene. This period of uncertainty caused my thoughts to leap to the possibility that this could be one of our small teams of employees working on signs, bridges, traffic counts, permits, surveying, etc. And once again, your faces flashed before my mind.

With deep sadness but selfish joy, we did finally confirm that that the tragedy did not involve any of our highway employees. BUT IT COULD HAVE! This could have easily involved any employees from any of our branches, sections, and units. I plead to each and every one of you: be as safe as you possibly can in all that you do. Your family is depending on you to show up at work and to come home when you have finished.

I pray that God blankets our highway workers with His mercy for our safety. I pray that He comforts those families who were not so fortunate.

— Kevin

## Lawrence County men read at Fallsburg in memory of Dr. Seuss



Martin Wright, above center; James Copley, far left; and Mike Cooper, immediate left; read to students at Fallsburg Elementary during *Read Across America*, the annual nationwide reading emphasis program held in March (as close to Dr. Seuss's March 2 birthday as possible).





## Training brings D-12 skills, knowledge to even greater levels



*Plan reading for Right of Way, above, was held recently at May Lodge, Jenny Wiley.*

*- Photo by Kevin Damron*

*District 12 folks attended a **Roadside Design** workshop, conducted by Bill Gulick at May Lodge, Jenny Wiley State Resort Park.*

*- Photo by Kevin Damron*



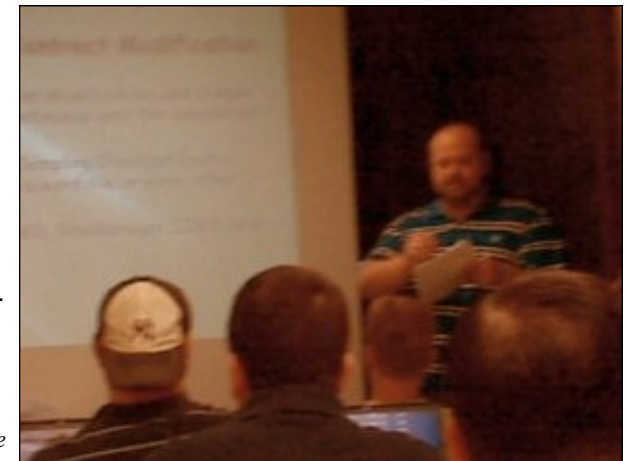
*John Webb presents a breakout session at the recent Section employees meeting at Lake Cumberland.*

*- Photo by Kevin Damron*



*Project Delivery and Preservation folks, left, learned how to recognize the signs of substance abuse during training at the District Office.*

*- Photo by Sara George*





## Stimulus money funds needed improvements in Letcher, Knott

**D**istrict 12 was awarded two projects as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, commonly called stimulus money, one in Letcher and one in Knott County.

KY 15X in Whitesburg, pictured below, left, has major improvements under way. As you can see, this is a heavily congested area with no turn lanes, even at the traffic signals. The work involves widening

the two bridges shown in the photo, widening the roadway, and creating a continuous center left turn lane.

Mountain Enterprises won the bid at \$2,742,550.63. Bush and Burchett of Allen, Floyd County, is subcontractor for the bridge work. Project Manager Greg Tackett said the work should be finished by late summer/early fall.

A dangerous curve on KY 160 at Knott County Central High School,

pictured below, right, will be softened during the second stimulus project.

Frederick and May of West Liberty started work March 15 with a contract of \$1.3 million, some \$200,000 less than engineers' estimates.

The roadway will be moved about 75 feet toward the hillside, which will be shaved to create the space. A left turn lane into the high school

will be added. Fill material will be put in the old car wash site, visible in the right side of the photo.

The high school entrance can be seen in the middle left side of the photo. The project should help congestion and reduce rear-end crashes.





## Jay White Memorial Avenue dedicated March 26 in Whitesburg

**V**eterans in Letcher County honor their own, often by asking the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet—by way of a resolution from the Letcher County Fiscal Court—to name a road or bridge in memory of their fellow servicemen who have passed on.

On Friday, March 26, at 11 a.m., this honor was paid to the memory of Specialist Jay Travis White Sr., who died suddenly and unexpectedly at the age of 39 on October 26, 2008.

A US Army veteran, Jay served his country from June 1997 to July 2000, part of that time in Korea.

Jay also earned a civil engineering degree from the University of Kentucky (1991). He served the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Highway District 12, as resident engineer in Letcher County, the job he held at the time of his death.

One of “Jay’s Projects” involved improvements to KY 15 in Whitesburg, including corridors KY 15C and KY 15X. One of those, KY 15C, which runs in front of the Veterans Museum, is now Specialist Jay Travis White Memorial Avenue.

Among those who participated in the dedication ceremony were Chief District Engineer Kevin Damron, Paintsville Section Engineer Doug Wright (Jay’s supervisor and friend), District 12 Information Officer Sara George, and Jay’s sons, Travis (Jay Travis Jr.) and David, who unveiled the sign.

His mother, Hope White, hosted a reception following the ceremony. Tane Campbell, Administrative Specialist for the Whitesburg Section office, coordinated the event, which was attended by all D-12 employees in Letcher County, including some who are now retired, as well as more than a dozen from other D-12 offices, a testament to the respect and affection in which Jay will be remembered.



**JAY WHITE**  
1968-2008

## ♪ ♪ 🍏 LIFE NOTES 🍏 ♪ ♪

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**Jeremy Hall** (Johnson County Maintenance) and his wife, Kristen, proudly announce the birth of their daughter, Rebecca Katelyn, on January 29, 2010, at 8:49 p.m. She weighed in at 7 pounds, 10 ounces.



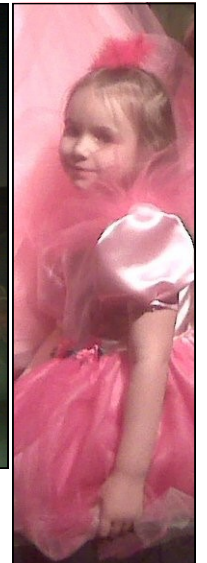
## D-12 develops connections in Oz



**Shantana Woodward** (ROW);  
Gabe Johnson, son  
of **John Michael**



**Johnson** (Project Development); Jason Justice, cousin of **Paxton Weddington** (Section Engineer); and Taylor George, granddaughter of **Sara George** are all *Wizard of Oz* cast members at Artists Collaborative Theatre in Elkhorn. The show runs two more weekends: April 1-4 and April 8-11. Tickets are \$8. Contact Shantana or Sara if you want reservations (some shows already sold out).



## Cathy Dye directs, Tim Dye portrays key character in Easter musical; District 12 family invited to attend Wednesday or Friday at 7 o'clock

**P**ikeville Free Will Baptist Church on Chloe Road, just beyond Pikeville Elementary School on the right, is the scene of an Easter musical that will leave you breathless.

Directed by our own Cathy Dye, *More than just a man* is the story of the ministry, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as seen through the eyes of Nicodemus (Jason Brewer) and Joseph of Arimathea (Tim Dye). Jesus is portrayed by Mike Adkins (Faith Electrical).

The church choir and cast members perform all songs. Kim Coleman is the musical director.

There are two remaining performances: Wednesday, March 31, and Friday, April 2, both at 7 p.m. There is no admission charge. Pastor Jim Patton says, "Ours is a church with no walls, all are welcome."

Others in the cast include Jacob Coleman (Young Jesus), Chris Brown (Young Joseph), Ron Diddle (Young Caiaphas), Tara Adkins (Mary), Mark Fields, Kevin Coleman, Avery Coleman, Taylor Sowards, Hannah Adkins, Hannah Maynard,

Becky Thacker, Louella Mattingly, Kathleen Goff, Kenny Hamilton, Cecil Williams, Jim Patton, Henry Shepherd, Kerry Gillespie, Jonda Patton, Debbie Justice,

Derena Coleman, Kelly Sowards, Eric Mul-

lins, Mitch Smith, Paul Maynard, Cecil Williams, Curt Wallace, John Newsome, Donnie Sword, Tommy Johnson,

Carla Shepherd, Linda Brown, Ron Coleman, Alan Phillips, Fred Mullins, and Sheila Compton.

In addition to numbers by the full choir, solos will be performed by Jacob Coleman, Tara Adkins, Linda Brown, Carla Shepherd, Kathy Goff, Sheila Compton, Becky Thacker, Henry Shepherd, Jim Patton, Cecil Williams, Tim Dye, and Jason Brewer.

